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motion, etc. These elucidative remarks of the author will be found highly valuable by students of the philosophy and history of science, while the references to the recent literature in this department, which is very rich, will also be found helpful. The price of the book, which in the German is quite expensive, has been reduced, and the publishers have taken every measure to render the work attractive and accessible to the public for which it is intended.

VORTRÄGE ÜBER DESCENDENZTHEORIE GEHALTEN AN DER UNIVERSITÄT ZU FREIBURG IM BREISGAU. Von *August Weismann*. Mit 3 farbigen Tafeln und 131 Textfiguren. Jena: Verlag von Gustav Fischer. 1902. Pages, Erster Band, xii, 456. Zweiter Band, vi, 462.

After a long silence and after the smoke of the great controversy which ten years ago or more hung over the battle-fields of biology has entirely vanished, the name of Weismann again appears upon the literary horizon. There is a note of sadness in the present two volumes of lectures on the *Theory of Descent*. Its author remarks that "when a life which has been full of the joy that labor brings is nearing its end, a desire inevitably arises to put into symmetrical and harmonious form the main results of one's achievements, as a bequest to the generations to come." A painful affection of the eyes has greatly hindered his labors, and he feels uncertain whether time or strength will long be left him for the further improvement of his biological system. These have been the motives which have led him to the present publication. It is hoped that his apprehensions will not be fulfilled.

The work is a collection of lectures on general biology which the author delivered before a mixed audience of students of medicine and natural sciences. Weismann still stoutly maintains that, despite the opposition which they have encountered, his biological views of descent and heredity are essentially and fundamentally correct,—notably his assumption of the "determining" units of life (determinants) and their relation to the ids. Closely connected with the theory of determinants stands his theory of Germinal Selection (expounded some years ago in the pages of *The Monist*), without which, he claims, the great thought of the controlling influence of natural selection in the transmutation of living forms with the rejection of the unfit and the selection of the fit, would remain a torso, a tree without roots. The application of this principle of selection to each and every single element of the various categories of vital units, is, he states, the very gist and kernel of his biological views. It is the dominating thought of the lectures, that in which their significance centers. "It will endure," says Weismann, "even though everything else the work contains shall perish."

Whatever may be the opinion of critics on this point, none can gainsay that the picture of modern biological research, which the great inquirer has here unrolled, is one of great fascination and replete with instruction.